

REMARKS

In the July 24, 2006 Office Action, the claims were rejected as set forth below:

<u>Claim Number</u>	<u>Rejected Under</u>	<u>Reference(s)</u>
1-2, 5, 9, 11-12, 14, 31-32, 36-38, 40-41, 43	35 U.S.C. §102(b)	U.S. Patent No. 2,678,458 (<u>Vosbikian et al.</u>)
1-2, 8-9, 11-12, 14, 31, 35-38, 40-41, 44	35 U.S.C. §102(b)	U.S. Patent No. 4,455,705 (<u>Graham</u>)
1-2, 5-6, 8, 11-12, 14, 31-33, 35-7, 40-41, 43	35 U.S.C. §102(b)	U.S. Patent No. 3,526,918 (<u>Leland</u>)
1-2, 5, 9, 11-12, 14, 31-32, 36-38, 40-41, 43	35 U.S.C. §102(b)	DE 26 43 717 (<u>Pfeifer</u>)
3, 4	35 U.S.C. §103(a)	DE 26 43 717 (<u>Pfeifer</u>)
5, 32	35 U.S.C. §103(a)	<u>Graham</u> or <u>Vosbikian</u> in view of <u>Leland</u>
7, 34	35 U.S.C. §103(a)	<u>Graham</u> , <u>Vosbikian</u> , <u>Leland</u> , or <u>Pfeifer</u> in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,155,432 (<u>Anderson</u>)
10, 39	35 U.S.C. §103(a)	<u>Pfeifer</u> in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,550,639 (<u>Brown et al</u>)
13, 42	35 U.S.C. §103(a)	<u>Graham</u> , <u>Vosbikian</u> , <u>Leland</u> , or <u>Pfeifer</u> in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,608,118 (<u>Kosaka et al</u>)

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the several rejections in light of amendments to the claims and remarks as set forth below.

I. Amendments to the Claims

As shown in the preceding listing of claims, applicants have amended claims 1 and 31 each to incorporate the subject matter of claim 36, i.e., that the squeegee blade is attached to an end of the disposable wipe. Claim 1 has been amended to specify that the squeegee blade is attached to one end of the disposable wipe. Claim 31 has been amended to specify that the squeegee blade is attached to an end of the disposable wipe. Claim 36 has been cancelled. Claim 2 has been amended to clarify that the disposable wipe is directly attached to the handle attachment surface of the mop head.

II. Discussion

A. 35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §102 rejections since none of the cited references teach all elements of the presently-claimed subject matter as discussed below. For the Examiner's convenience, the rejections are addressed in the order in which they appear in the July 24, 2006 Office Action.

A1. 35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections based on Vosbikian et al.

Vosbikian et al. does not teach all presently-claimed elements. The Office Action states at page 3 that Vosbikian teaches a disposable wipe (1); however, element (1) is described in Vosbikian at Column 2, lines 11-16 as "A block of sponge material." Applicants respectfully submit that a block of sponge material is not the same thing as a wipe, and a rejection of claim 1 under §102 based on Vosbikian is improper since Vosbikian does not teach a wipe. The rejection of claim 31 is improper for similar reasons. Since the remainder of the currently-pending claims depend directly or indirectly from claims 1 or 31, the rejections of the dependent claims should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons, and also for the reasons set forth below.

Claim 2 is allegedly anticipated since the block of sponge material (1) in Vosbikian is "indirectly attached" to the handle attachment surface of the mop head. However, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 of Vosbikian, the block of sponge material is attached to the surface of the mop head opposite to the surface where the handle attaches. The block of sponge material (1) does not appear to contact the handle attachment surface at all. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Vosbikian does not teach attachment of the block of sponge material to the handle attachment surface.

However, to avoid any possibility of confusion, claim 2 has been amended to clarify that the wipe is directly attached.

Claims 9 and 38 have been rejected under §102 but with no citation to a specific teaching that is explicit or implied in the reference. Applicants respectfully request clarification of the alleged teaching of the squeegee and wipe being used simultaneously, especially in light of Figure 4, which illustrates use of the squeegee with the mop head inverted.

A2. 35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections based on Graham

Graham does not teach all presently-claimed elements. With regard to claim 1, Graham does not teach a squeegee blade attached to a disposable wipe wherein removal of the wipe causes the squeegee blade to also be removed from the mop head. First, the cleaning pad in Graham is not attached to the squeegee blade 40. Instead, squeegee blade 40 is "supported by and extends outwardly from one side edge of the applicator head 40" as noted at Column 4, lines 11-12. The Office Action alleges that element 10 is part of the squeegee blade, but element 10 is identified in Graham as the applicator head. Additionally, it is clear that removal of cleaning pad 16 from applicator head 10 would not result in the removal of squeegee blade 40. Furthermore, Graham does not teach a wipe. Rather, element 16 is described not as a wipe, but a "cleaning pad 16 which is preferably formed of sponge-like material, such as prepolymer polyester urethane" at Column 2, lines 50-52. Since Graham does not teach a wipe, the rejection of claim 31 should also be withdrawn. Since the remainder of the currently-pending claims depend directly or indirectly from claims 1 or 31, the rejections of the dependent claims should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons, and also for the reasons set forth below.

Claim 2 is allegedly anticipated since the cleaning pad is "indirectly attached" to the handle attachment surface of the mop head. However, as shown in Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Graham, the block of sponge material is attached to the surface of the mop head opposite to the surface where the handle attaches. The pad is not shown to contact the handle attachment surface at all. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Graham does not teach attachment of the block of sponge material to the handle

attachment surface. However, to avoid any possibility of confusion, claim 2 has been amended to clarify that the wipe is directly attached.

Claim 8 is allegedly anticipated by the mechanical fasteners 20 in Graham. However, as noted at Column 3, lines 25-43 and column 4, lines 31-37, fasteners 20 serve to attach the cleaning pad to the applicator head, not to attach the squeegee blade to the cleaning pad.

Claims 9 and 38 have been rejected under §102 but with no citation to a specific teaching that is explicit or implied in the reference. Applicants respectfully request clarification of the alleged teaching of the squeegee and wipe being used simultaneously.

Applicants have incorporated the subject matter of claim 36 into claims 1 and 31, but claim 36 has been rejected due to Graham's alleged teaching of the blade being attached to "an upper end of the wipe" in Figure 1. Applicants respectfully submit that rejection on this basis is improper since, as noted above, the squeegee blade 40 is shown in Graham to be attached to the applicator head 10 and not the cleaning pad.

A3. 35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections based on Leland

Leland does not teach all presently-claimed elements. With regard to claim 1, the cited portions of Leland do not teach a squeegee blade attached to a disposable wipe wherein removal of the wipe causes the squeegee blade to also be removed from the mop head. First, element 13 in Leland is described as the "internal inner surface" of pad member 12. See Col. 2, lines 31-34. The "internal inner surface" of pad member(s) 12 does not contact a surface to be cleaned, since surface 13 is inside the pad(s) 12. Additionally, Leland does not teach a mop head having a handle attachment surface. Element 18 is described in Leland as a "handle," not a handle attachment surface as alleged in the Office Action. See Column 2, lines 8-10 ("...and a handle 18 internally secured to said pad members 12 by holder means 20"). The handle 18 and holder means in 20 are located in between members 12 as an integrated unit. See Column 3, lines 1- 11.

Furthermore, Leland does not teach a wipe. Rather, element 12 are described not as a wipe, but as elements having "any shape but are preferably of rectangular shape constructed of spongy compressible material having interconnecting pores

releasably absorbing liquid placed in contact therewith" (emphasis added). Since Leland teaches use of spongy material and does not teach a wipe, the rejection of claim 31 should also be withdrawn. Since the remainder of the currently-pending claims depend directly or indirectly from claims 1 or 31, the rejections of the dependent claims should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons

A4. 35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections based on Pfeifer

Several claims have been rejected based on the German-language Pfeifer reference based on the drawings alone, with the exception of claims 5 and 14 which reference the abstract. Specifically, there is no indication from the cited materials as to how the various illustrated components are attached to the tool. Nonetheless, to advance prosecution, Applicants make the arguments below.

With regard to claim 1 and 31, applicants have added the limitation that the squeegee blade is attached to an end of the wipe. This feature is not taught in Pfeifer. The Office Action alleges, with regard to claim 36, that in Pfeifer, "the squeegee blade is attached to the top end of the wipe (figure 2)." Applicants respectfully disagree. Squeegee blade 5 is shown in Figure 2 to be embedded in the wiping cloth 4. This can be seen in Figure 2 of Pfeifer. Blade 5 includes two tips, with one tip protruding outward from the surface of the cloth, and the other tip protruding inward to fit into groove 6. The "sides" of the blade (i.e. the portions of the blade that are not tips) are both in contact with the cloth. Accordingly, the squeegee blade is not on the "top end" of the wipe, but is instead embedded in the cloth. Since the remainder of the currently-pending claims depend directly or indirectly from claims 1 or 31, the rejections of the dependent claims should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons.

B. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of Pfeifer

Claims 3 and 4 have been rejected as obvious in light of Pfeifer. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the §103 rejections in light of Pfeifer since such rejections are improper. Specifically, Applicants submit that: the allegedly-obvious modifications of Pfeifer do not teach all claimed elements; the Office Action sets out no motivation to modify the reference; and, furthermore, the alleged modification would not have a reasonable expectation of success since it teaches away from the intended functionality of the device in Pfeifer.

Pfeifer is alleged to teach all elements except that the squeegee blade is located on the handle attachment surface. However, Applicants respectfully submit that Pfeifer further fails to teach "the squeegee blade is attached to one of the ends of the disposable wipe such that the squeegee blade is located on the handle attachment surface" as set forth in claim 4. This limitation is not addressed in the obviousness rejection based on Pfeifer. As noted above, Pfeifer does not teach attaching the squeegee blade to an end of a wipe at all. Instead, squeegee blade 5 is shown in Figure 2 to be embedded in the wiping cloth 4. This can be seen in Figure 2 in that blade tip 5 protrudes outward from the surface of the cloth, but also inward to fit into groove 6. Accordingly, the squeegee blade is not "on" the wipe, but is attached in the wipe such that the blade is attached to the wipe on both (non-tip) sides of the blade.

The Office Action states at page 12 that "it is known in the art to use mop heads of various sizes for different jobs." However, the Office Action does not state any teaching, motivation, or suggestion in Pfeifer (or in knowledge of one of skill in the art) as to why a skilled artisan would use the wrong sized cleaning cloth or wipe for a given mop head.

Furthermore, any such modification would not be obvious since it would render Pfeifer inoperative for its intended function. As noted previously, in Pfeifer, a tip of blade 5 extends outward from the cloth and the other tip of blade 5 fits into groove 6. If an oversized cloth were used such that the portion of the cloth including blade 5 wrapped around to the handle attachment surface, the groove would be rendered useless and the wiper would lose its intended functionality absent further modification to secure the blade. Any further modification to maintain the groove functionality would proceed based on improper hindsight analysis. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the §103 rejections as to claims 3 and 4.

Conclusion

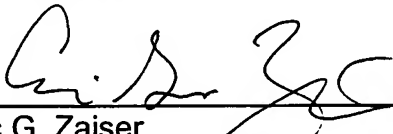
Applicants respectfully submit that the currently-claimed subject matter is not taught in the cited references, either alone or in any obvious combination or modification thereof, and therefore the present application is in condition for allowance. Should any issues or questions arise with respect to this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at his convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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